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PRESS RELEASE:

Inauguration of a Memorial Wall in Honour of the African Union (AU) Heroes and Heroines

Addis Ababa, 25 May 2019: At the Mwalimu Julius Nyerere Peace and Security Building in the AU headquarters, a memorial wall was officially inaugurated in honour of the heroes and heroines of the African Union (AU), who paid the ultimate price in AU peace support missions across the continent.

These include AU mandated and AU authorized missions such as; the AU Mission in Comoros, Ethiopia-Eritrea (2000), Liberia (2003), Cote d'Ivoire (2003), The Sudan (2004), DRC (2005), the Comoros (2006), Burundi (2006), Somalia (2007 – to date), Sudan - Darfur (2007 - to date), the Regional Cooperation Initiative for the Elimination of the Lords' Resistance Army (2011), Mali (2012), the Central African Republic (2013), the Multi National Joint Task Force against Boko Haram (2015 – to date), the G5 Sahel Joint Force (2017 – to date), the Kingdom of Lesotho (2018 – now closed). They were all deployed to contribute to peace and stability in the affected regions and countries.

Speaking at the ceremony, H.E. Ambassador Smail Chergui, AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, recalled that these civilians and soldiers despite working under very difficult conditions, did not spare any efforts to brave the odds and to uphold human dignity. In his words, "Our heroes are our stars. Some paid the ultimate sacrifice and others are maimed for life. Today we honour the blood they shed for us. They remain alive in our minds, men and women of courage, who made the greatest sacrifice. They will inspire us for years to come."

Other speakers included H.E. Ambassador Thomas Kwesi Quartey, Deputy Chairperson of the AU Commission, and H.E. Ambassador Osama Abdelkalek of Egypt cum Chairperson of the AU Permanent Representatives' Committee (PRC); who all lauded the sacrifices made by our African heroes and heroines for greater peace and stability on the continent.

Over one hundred high-level personalities in attendance, from the Commission leadership, Member States, Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs), AU Staff and AU Partners, observed a minute of silence in honour of these noble Africans who

distinguished themselves in the service of Humanity. This was followed by the “laying of the memorial wreath”, in which the speakers were joined by H.E. Ambassador Toba Sebade of Togo on behalf of the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC), and H.E. Ambassador Ranieri Sabatucci, the European Union (EU) Representative to the AU.

This inauguration ceremony which took place on “Africa Day”, the day on which the then Organization of African Unity (OAU), now African Union (AU), was founded in 1963; captured the symbolic essence of Africa’s gratitude and recognition of its sons and daughters who have given and continue to give of themselves the greatest sacrifice possible, for a more peaceful and prosperous Africa.

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